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Housekeepers' Chat

Thurs., Feb. 9

(NOT FOR PUBLICATION)

Subject: "An Old New England Saturday Night Supper." Garden advice from W. R. Beattie, Bureau of Plant Industry; menu and recipes from Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture.

Bulletin available: "The City Home Garden."

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Today's program is divided into two parts. Part I is devoted to such pleasant topics as starting geraniums in kitchen windows, and Part II is devoted to Baked Beans, Brown Bread, and so forth.

Many women who listened-in recently to the garden talk prepared by W.R.B., the Garden Specialist, have asked for more advice on what to plant in small backyard gardens. As I told W.R.B., my listeners are almost as much interested now in his advice about planting spring gardens, as they are in my delicious recipes. A fickle public, is mine.

"Isn't it odd," I asked, "that the women are thinking about gardens so early, especially up in the northern part of the country?"

"Not at all," said my friend the Garden Specialist. "The days are growing longer now, and there is every indication that spring is almost here. Down south, of course, the folks are 'making garden', and planting flowers.

"This is the time of year when women folks plan to fix up their backyards, and improve conditions around the kitchen door, as well as around the front door. One of the ways to do this is to start plants or flowers, and even vegetables, in the house, and have them ready to plant outdoors just as soon as the weather becomes warm. One friend of mine has several small boxes in her kitchen windows, some filled with sand, and others with nice, loamy, sifted soil. In the boxes filled with sand, she is starting cuttings of geraniums, getting them ready for planting along the foundation of the house, especially on the south and west sides, where it is sunny. In one of the boxes of loamy soil she has planted seeds of scarlet sage, and the plants are already coming up. These will be transplanted to other boxes, and will make nice large plants, almost ready to bloom, by the time the weather is suitable for putting them out in the border around her back porch. She has another box in which tomato and pepper plants are starting to grow, and in still another box, the tiniest little lettuce plants are peeping through the ground. Of course it means some work, to keep these plants watered, and to keep them from getting chilled. But think of the salads they'll make, Aunt Sammy."

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"Yes," I said, "Lettuce and tomatoes will help simplify the meal-planning problem. But how does your friend protect these plants, on cold nights?"

"On cold nights," explained W.R.B., "she pulls down the window shades, and places several pieces of newspaper between the boxes of plants, and the window. In this way, the plants are protected by both the window shade, and the papers. She keeps her plant boxes on a little table, and on very cold nights, she pulls the table away from the window, so that the plants will not get chilled. She waters the plants with a clothes sprinkling bulb-- you know what I mean-- a rubber bulb which can be operated by simply squeezing it, and inserting it in a small jar of water to fill. She sprays the water over the plants, the way you sprinkle clothes, Aunt Sammy."

"I see. Does she have trouble with her plants falling over and dying, from a disease called damping?"

"Yes," said my friend. "She did, before she learned to water her plants more carefully, and to apply just enough water to keep them in a growing condition. At present she has no trouble from that source. She took, the precaution, however of baking the soil for an hour or so, in the oven, several days before she planted seed in it.

"In this same box, she has sown 6 or 8 kinds of flower seed, just a few of each kind, and only those flowers which can be planted early. She will plant seeds of these flowers in the open ground, too, when the weather becomes warm enough, but if her plants come through all right, she will have both early and late flowers in her garden," concluded W. R. B.

Before I begin **Part II** of this program, I want to suggest that if you have questions to ask about flowers, and about vegetable gardens, you send them to me, in care of Station _____. I'll forward them to W. R. B., so that he can answer them for you.

Here's the menu, for a New England Saturday night supper: Baked Beans; Chili Sauce; Steamed Brown Bread; Sliced Oranges, and Sugar Cookies.

A friend of mine, who is a native of Boston, prefers pea beans to navy beans because the pea beans keep their shape better. She is very particular about the bean pot, too. She says you cannot bake beans properly, in a shallow pan, because they dry out, and never develop the rich flavor that comes from baking in a covered earthenware pot. She uses an old-fashioned, brown, earthenware pot, with a small top, and bulging sides. I wouldn't dare tell my Boston friend that I have used a five-pound lard pail, to cook beans in. She'd lose her faith in me.

My recipe for Boston Baked Beans comes from the Bureau of Home Economics. Six ingredients, for Boston Baked Beans:

2 cups dried beans	1 teaspoon mustard, if desired
1/2 pound salt pork	1 1/2 teaspoons salt (depending
4 tablespoons molasses	on saltiness of pork), and
Onion, if desired	

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I'll repeat the six ingredients, for Boston Baked Beans: (Repeat)

Soak the beans overnight in cold water, and then cook them gently, until they are soft, but not mushy. Score the rind of the salt pork, and put half of the pork in the bottom of the bean pot. Add the par-boiled beans, mix the molasses and other seasonings with a little hot water, and pour over the beans. Add just enough more water to cover. Place the rest of the salt pork on top, cover the pot, and cook the beans very slowly in the oven for 6 to 7 hours. Add a little hot water from time to time, to replace that which cooks away and is absorbed by the beans. Keep the lid on the bean pot until the last hour of cooking. Then uncover, and allow the beans and pork on the top to brown.

Next, the recipe for Boston Brown Bread. Seven ingredients, as follows:

1 cup corn meal.	3/4 cup molasses.
1 cup rye meal.	2 cups sour milk and 1 1/2 teaspoons
1 cup Graham flour.	soda, or 1 3/4 cups sweet milk and
1 teaspoon salt.	4 teaspoons baking powder.

Seven ingredients for Boston Brown Bread. (Repeat)

Mix and sift the dry ingredients; add the molasses and the milk. Beat the mixture thoroughly. Pour the batter into a greased tin can, or mold, until it is about three-fourths full. Cover, and steam for 3 1/2 hours. Remove the cover, and bake the bread in a moderate oven for 1/2 hour to dry it off. If the bread seems likely to crumble loop a clean string around the loaf and cut slices by pulling the ends of the string.

And one more recipe, for Sugar Cookies. Eight ingredients:

1/4 cup milk, or less	4 teaspoons baking powder
4 cups sifted soft-wheat flour	2 cups sugar
1 cup fat	1/2 teaspoon salt, and
2 eggs	3 teaspoons flavoring

Everybody have eight ingredients, for Sugar Cookies? I'll repeat them: (Repeat)

Place the fat in a warm place, until it becomes soft, though not melted, so it will combine easily with the sugar. After the fat and the sugar are thoroughly combined, stir in the beaten egg yolks, and add alternately the dry ingredients, which have been mixed and sifted together, and the liquid. Add the liquid gradually. Add the flavoring, and fold in the well-beaten egg whites. Roll the dough thin, handling it no more than necessary, cut it in any desired shapes, and bake the cookies on a greased baking sheet in a fairly hot oven (about 375° to 400° F.). Instead of rolling out the dough it may be chilled, and sliced. Whether rolled or sliced, chilling the dough makes it easier to handle. This recipe. This recipe makes about 100 thin cookies.

To repeat the menu: Baked Beans; Chili Sauce; Steamed Brown Bread, Sliced Oranges; and Sugar Cookies.

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